

CONSERVATION RESERVE NOTE 112

January, 2004

This Note transmits the continuing joint agency promotion to support the Living Snow Fence MOU signed by NRCS, FSA, SWCD and MN/DOT in March 2002. Attached are revised MN/DOT worksheets A and B for the program. The revised worksheets replace those distributed in November 2002; those should be discarded immediately.

NRCS plays a significant role in expanding the installation of living snow fences throughout the state, especially in priority locations near interstates and highways in rural areas where blowing snow can cause significant drifting.

Amended CRP cost-share policy allows MN/DOT the ability to provide additional cost share for installing living snow fences. Participants may be eligible for 100 % reimbursement of eligible costs for installing this practice in MN/DOT recognized priority locations. This includes MNDOT providing 100% cost-share for the installation of geotextile fabric mulch for weed control and moisture retention.

The practice standard for living snow fences is found in the FOTG, Section IV under Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment, Practice Code 380. For CRP purposes, 17A Living Snow Fences is a Continuous CRP practice.

Please assist our partners to distribute this announcement as appropriate for your counties (news articles, PSAs, public meetings, etc.).

Questions about the Living Snow Fence program can be directed to Ginger Kopp, Staff Forester, 651-602-7909 or ginger.kopp@mn.usda.gov.

WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

DIST: AC
FO
ARC
RC&D
Greg Anderson, FSA, St. Paul, MN



January 9, 2004

Living Snow Fence Partners:

The winter season brings a renewed sense of urgency for controlling blowing and drifting snow. The need for living snow fences to capture blowing and drifting snow before it reaches our highways is always brought to the forefront at this time of year. It only takes one highly visible and successful planting in a county to demonstrate for road authorities, landowners and the traveling public that this is a win/win conservation practice. As program participants care for these strategically placed plantings of trees, shrubs and grasses, they are providing a service that will potentially save lives, money and time for them and their fellow highway travelers. This year there has been a positive change in federal legislation to encourage landowners to work with us.

Due to a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) policy change, authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) can now participate along with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in the cost of installing a living snow fence practice. This means program participants are eligible to receive 100 percent cost share, including sales tax, for implementing a living snow fence practice on private property. Mn/DOT will also provide 100 percent cost share for furnishing and installing geotextile fabric mulch for weed control and moisture retention. *(Refer to Living Snow Fence Cost Share Worksheet in the attachment to calculate the cost share payment that a participant is eligible to receive.)*

Participants will continue to receive annual rental payments from both FSA and Mn/DOT. FSA will provide payments for the land taken out of production by the living snow fence practice. Mn/DOT will provide payments for maintaining the planting and the inconvenience of farming around it. *(Refer to Living Snow Fence Rental Payment Worksheet in the attachment to calculate the annual rental payment that a participant is eligible to receive.)*

Leadership within our agencies and organizations support this program and dedicate the funding needed to successfully deliver the program.

"It is a privilege for our agency to participate in a program that is directed towards increasing safety on our highways during the winter season," said Lt. Governor Carol Molnau, Mn/DOT Transportation Commissioner. "It's through this partnership that we are able to provide an even greater service to the citizens of Minnesota."

"The Living Snow Fence program is another example of the Farm Service Agency at work across Minnesota," said State Executive Director John Monson. "Through the use of USDA funds we are able to partner with landowners, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to make our highways safer for our citizens, both rural and urban."

"Just as NRCS has saved soil, water and other natural resources with conservation practices, we are devoted to saving lives and improving traffic safety through the establishment of living snow fences," said Bill Hunt, Minnesota NRCS State Conservationist. "Working with our partners and through the Conservation Reserve Program we can reduce the dangers of blowing and drifting snow on our highways just as effectively as we reduce erosion on our cropland."

“Soil and Water Conservation Districts are key implementers at the local level. They have a close relationship with the land users in their communities and understand what it takes to get conservation on the land,” said LeAnn Buck, Executive Director of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. “I’m pleased that SWCDs can be part of a program that conserves soil and water resources while making highway travel safer and more efficient.”

By partnering, we are able to design, install and care for living snow fences along our state highways faster and more economically than ever before. Mn/DOT no longer has to invest two years acquiring easements before planting a living snow fence, because we are able to deliver a program in partnership with the federal Conservation Reserve Program using CRP contracts and Mn/DOT's living snow fence landowner agreements. Landowners typically prefer these contracts and agreements because there are no easements tied to the land.

This initiative provides a way for participants to be compensated for planting a living snow fence on their private land while providing a service for the driving public. Participants also tend to take more ownership and pride in the care and maintenance of the planting, which leads to healthier, faster growing living snow fences.

We want to encourage you to continue developing strong cohesive county living snow fence work groups. The grass-roots relationships being developed between USDA, SWCD and Mn/DOT Districts demonstrate an interagency commitment and shows participants that it is a worthwhile endeavor to plant a living snow fence on their land.

Please visit www.livingsnowfence.dot.state.mn.us for continued updates or to download forms and other living snow fence promotional materials.

Thanks for your dedicated service and commitment to this environmentally sound solution for making transportation safer and more efficient during Minnesota winters.



Greg Anderson
Agricultural Program Specialist
FSA
(651) 602-7731



Dan Gullickson
Living Snow Fence Coordinator
Mn/DOT
(651) 284-3763



Ginger Kopp
Staff Forester
NRCS
(651) 602-7909



Sheila Vanney
Assistant Director
MASWCD
(651) 690-9028

Farmer/Landowner Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip Code: _____ **FSA Farm No.:** _____
Phone Number: _____ **FSA Tract No.:** _____

Trunk Highway _____ **Reference Post** _____ **to** _____
County _____ **Township** _____ **Section** _____

USDA Farm Service Agency

1. Eligible acres of CRP Living Snow Fence = length _____ ft X width _____ ft ÷ 43,560 sq. ft. _____ acres for CRP enrollment.
2. CRP Rental Rate per acre is \$ _____ dollars (Block 10A of the CRP-1).
3. CRP Annual Contract Payment \$ _____ dollars (Block 10B of the CRP-1).
4. Total annual CRP rental payments _____ (item 3 x 10 to 15 years less the portion of first year CRP dollars if CRP-1 contract does not begin on 10/01).
5. Signing Incentive Payment \$ _____ dollars (Item 1 eligible acres times the number of full years of the CRP-1 times \$10).
6. Total USDA annual CRP payments and SIP made over the life of the CRP-1 Contract \$ _____ dollars (items 4 + 5).

Mn/DOT

Length of the Mn/DOT Living Snow Fence Agreement = _____ years
 The inconvenience payment of having to farm around the living snow fence is _____ lineal ft. x
 150 feet ÷ 43,560 sq. ft. = _____ acres. (Round to the second decimal point).

7. Mn/DOT provides compensation at a rate equal to 50% of the CRP annual rental rate (line 2 X 50%), but no less than \$30.00 per acre. Mn/DOT's annual compensation rate per acre =
 \$ _____ acre X # _____ acres is \$ _____.

8. Annual compensation for growing a living snow fence using agroforestry principles such as watering, mowing, weed control, pruning, re-anchoring landscape fabric, and scouting to assess the condition of the living snow fence. Compensation for growing a living snow fence of \$0.20 per lineal foot of living snow fence maintained for _____ lineal feet, not to exceed a total of \$ _____.

9. Total annual Mn/DOT payment is (line 7 + line 8) is \$ _____.

10. Total Mn/DOT Payments made over the life of the agreement is \$ _____ dollars
 (line item 9 times 10-15 years which is length of the CRP-1 Contract).

Combined USDA Farm Service Agency & Mn/DOT Payments

Combined USDA and Mn/DOT annual payments (line 3 + line 9) \$ _____ dollars
 Combined USDA and Mn/DOT payments (line 6 + line 10) is \$ _____ dollars made over the life of this joint contract agreement.

Farmer/Landowner Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip Code: _____ **FSA Farm No.:** _____
Phone Number: _____ **FSA Tract No.:** _____

Trunk Highway _____ **Control Section** _____ **Reference Post** _____ **to** _____
County _____ **Township** _____ **Section** _____

Insert eligible CRP costs from producer receipts/bills:

1. Tree and Shrub Site Preparation on _____ acres \$ _____
2. Number of Bareroot Trees is _____ at a cost of \$ _____
3. Number of Container Conifers is _____ at a cost of \$ _____
4. Number of Shrubs is _____ at a cost of \$ _____
5. Cost of planting line items 2, 3, 4 from above \$ _____
6. Cost of one weed or insect control within 24 months
(note: CRP C/S is only authorized if this component
is needed for the cover establishment) \$ _____
7. Site Prep cost for Native Grasses on _____ acres \$ _____
8. Native Grass Seed cost for _____ acres \$ _____
(Note: seeding rate of 15 pounds per acre maximum)
9. Geotextile fabric (plastic mulch) cost on _____ feet \$ _____
(FSA will not be providing CRP C/S for this
component even in areas of 25 inch or less
rainfall)
10. Sales Tax \$ _____
11. Total producer costs for line items 1-10 \$ _____

Note: The 2002 Farm Bill has revised CRP policy as it relates to the ineligible contributor provision involving CRP Cost-share (C/S). Policy now states that C/S payments shall not exceed 100 percent of the eligible cost paid by CRP participant, including contributions of ineligible persons (someone who is not a signatory to the CRP-1). Therefore, if an ineligible person contributes (Mn/DOT) to the CP17A practice, C/S is computed by including Mn/DOT's contribution to the total eligible cost. Note: C/S is limited to the participants out-of-pocket eligible cost and therefore the participant shall never earn C/S exceeding 100 percent of out-of-pocket expense. Note: out-of-pocket expense is related to the NRCS-FOTG and is based on eligible components of practice CP17A and average prices for each component. Example: CRP participant incurs \$1700 expense for CP17A in which Mn/DOT contributes \$300 for geotextile fabric. Total practice cost is \$2000. CRP participant receives \$850 of CRP-C/S along with \$850 C/S from Mn/DOT for \$1700 total C/S which does not exceed 100% of participant's out-of-pocket expense of \$1700.

12. Insert total FSA cost-share based on CRP Practice CP17A cost-share rates and payments for line items 1-10, which are listed on page 1 of 2 of this worksheet: \$ _____

Item Value	Item Cost Share	Total Cost Share
1. _____		
2. _____		
3. _____		
4. _____		
5. _____		
6. _____		
7. _____		
8. _____		
9. (No FSA cost-share will be paid for geotextile fabric (plastic mulch).		
10. _____		

13. Insert total MnDOT cost-share (line 11 minus line 12) that includes Mn/DOT's share of the cost for geotextile fabric/plastic mulch equals: \$ _____

Note: The intent of Mn/DOT's contribution on line 13 is to achieve 100% cost share for the participant. Plus Mn/DOT will provide 100% cost share for furnishing and installing geotextile fabric/plastic mulching not to exceed \$1.00 per lineal foot.

14. Total Mn/DOT and FSA C/S payment (line 12 + line 13) is \$ _____

15. FSA Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) which is 80% of item G of the CCC-1245. \$ _____

16. Total cost-share and PIP for this CP17A Living Snow Fence Practice from (line 14 + line 15) is \$ _____

NOTE: CRP Practice CP17A is the ONLY CRP practice to be used with this program!

Living Snow Fence Example

Necessary Information

County:	Lyon County
Soil Rental Rate:	\$86 (Block 10A of CRP-1)
CRP Annual Contract payment:	\$34 (Block 10B of CRP-1)
Length:	475 Feet
Width:	40 Feet
Contract length:	15 years
Design:	Twin row with Freedom honeysuckle on 4 foot spacing w/in rows.

Farmer/Landowner Name: Ms. Who EverAddress: 123 Where Ever St.City: WhateverState: MNZip Code: 55555-5555Phone Number: 555-555-5555FSA Farm No.: 1234FSA Tract No.: 5678Trunk Highway 19

Reference Post _____ to _____

County LyonTownship Not This One Section 6**USDA Farm Service Agency (Use whole dollar amounts only.)**

3. Eligible acres of CRP Living Snow Fence = length 475 ft X width 40 ft ÷ 43,560 sq. ft. 044 acres for CRP enrollment.
4. CRP Rental Rate per acre is \$ 86 dollars (Block 10A of the CRP-1).
3. CRP Annual Contract Payment \$ 34 dollars (Block 10B of the CRP-1).
5. Total annual CRP rental payments 510 (item 3 x 10 to 15 years less the portion of first year CRP dollars if CRP-1 contract does not begin on 10/01).
5. Signing Incentive Payment \$ 60 dollars (Item 1 eligible acres times the number of full years of the CRP-1 times \$10).
6. Total USDA annual CRP payments and SIP made over the life of the CRP-1 Contract \$ 570 dollars (items 4 + 5).

Mn/DOTLength of the Mn/DOT Living Snow Fence Agreement = 15 yearsThe inconvenience payment of having to farm around the living snow fence is 475 lineal ft. x 150 feet ÷ 43,560 sq. ft. = 1.64* acres.

(*Round to the second decimal point).

7. Mn/DOT provides compensation at a rate equal to 50% of the CRP annual rental rate (line 2 X 50%), but no less than \$30.00 per acre. Mn/DOT's annual compensation rate per acre = \$ 43 acre X 1.64 acres is \$ 70.52.

8. Annual compensation for growing a living snow fence using agroforestry principles such as watering, mowing, weed control, pruning, re-anchoring landscape fabric, and scouting to assess the condition of the living snow fence. Compensation for growing a living snow fence of \$0.20 per lineal foot of living snow fence maintained for 475 lineal feet, not to exceed a total of \$ 95.

9. Total annual Mn/DOT payment is (line 7 + line 8) is \$ 165.52.

11. Total Mn/DOT Payments made over the life of the agreement is \$ 2482.80 dollars (line item 9 times 10-15 years which is length of the CRP-1 Contract).

Combined USDA Farm Service Agency & Mn/DOT PaymentsCombined USDA and Mn/DOT annual payments (line 3 + line 9) \$ 199.52 dollarsCombined USDA and Mn/DOT payments (line 6 + line 10) is \$ 3052.80 dollars made over the life of this joint contract agreement.

Farmer/Landowner Name: Ms. Who EverAddress: 123 Where Ever St.City: WhateverState: MNZip Code: 55555-5555Phone Number: 555-555-5555FSA Farm No.: 1234FSA Tract No.: 5678Trunk Highway 19 Control Section _____ Reference Post _____ to _____
County Lyon Township Not This One Section 6

Insert eligible CRP costs from producer receipts/bills:

1. Tree and Shrub Site Preparation on 0.44 acres \$ 10.00
2. Number of Bareroot Trees is _____ at a cost of \$ _____
3. Number of Container Conifers is _____ at a cost of \$ _____
4. Number of Shrubs is 238 at a cost of \$ 392.70
Estimated cost is \$1.65/shrub.
5. Cost of planting line items 2, 3, 4 from above. \$ 75.00
Estimated cost is \$0.30/shrub = \$71.40 (minimum cost share is \$75.00)
6. Cost of one weed or insect control within 24 months \$ 69.60
(note:CRP C/S is only authorized if this component is needed for the cover establishment)
Estimated cost is \$174/acre.
7. Site Prep cost for Native Grasses on _____ acres \$ _____
8. Native Grass Seed cost for 0.44 acres \$ 6.60
(Note: seeding rate of 15 pounds per acre maximum)
Estimated cost is \$15/acre
10. Geotextile fabric (plastic mulch) cost on 950* ft. \$ 522.50
(FSA will not be providing CRP C/S for this component even in areas of 25 inch or less rainfall.
*** 475 feet x 2**
10. Sales Tax \$ 69.93
11. Total producer costs for line items 1-10 \$ 1146.33

Note: The 2002 Farm Bill has revised CRP policy as it relates to the ineligible contributor provision involving CRP Cost-share (C/S). Policy now states that C/S payments shall not exceed 100 percent of the eligible cost paid by CRP participant, including contributions of ineligible persons (someone who is not a signatory to the CRP-1). Therefore, if an ineligible person contributes (Mn/DOT) to the CP17A practice, C/S is computed by including Mn/DOT's contribution to the total eligible cost. Note: C/S is limited to the participants out-of-pocket eligible cost and therefore the participant shall never earn C/S exceeding 100 percent of out-of-pocket expense. Note: out-of-pocket expense is related to the NRCS-FOTG and is based on eligible components of practice CP17A and average prices for each component. Example: CRP participant incurs \$1700 expense for CP17A in which Mn/DOT contributes \$300 for geotextile fabric. Total practice cost is \$2000. CRP participant receives \$850 of CRP-C/S along with \$850 C/S from Mn/DOT for \$1700 total C/S which does not exceed 100% of participant's out-of-pocket expense of \$1700.

Continued

12. Insert total FSA cost-share based on CRP Practice CP17A

cost-share rates and payments for line items 1-10, which are listed on page 1 of 2 of this worksheet: (sum 1-10 below Item Cost Share column) \$ 181.60

Item Value	Item Cost Share	Total Cost Share
1. <u>\$10.00</u>	<u>\$5.00</u>	<u>50%</u>
2. <u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
3. <u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
4. <u>\$392.70</u>	<u>\$119.00</u>	<u>50%</u>
5. <u>\$75.00</u>	<u>\$37.50</u>	<u>50%</u>
6. <u>\$69.60</u>	<u>\$17.10</u>	<u>25%</u>
7. <u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
8. <u>\$6.00</u>	<u>\$3.00</u>	<u>50%</u>
9. <u>0</u>	(FSA does not cost share geotextile or plastic mulch)	
10. <u>\$69.93</u>	(FSA does not cost share on taxes)	

13. Insert total MnDOT cost-share (line 11 minus line 12) that includes Mn/DOT's share of the cost for geotextile fabric/plastic mulch equals: \$ 964.23

Note: The intent of Mn/DOT's contribution on line 13 is to achieve 100% cost share for the participant. Plus Mn/DOT will provide 100% cost share for furnishing and installing geotextile fabric/plastic mulching not to exceed \$1.00 per lineal foot.

14. Total Mn/DOT and FSA C/S payment (line 12 + line 13) is \$ 1145.83

15. FSA Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) which is 80% of item G of the CCC-1245.

\$ 145.28**Calculated as \$181.60 x 80% (0.80) = \$145.28**

16. Total cost-share and PIP for this CP17A Living Snow Fence Practice from (line 14 + line 15) is

\$ 1291.11**NOTE: CRP Practice CP17A is the ONLY CRP practice to be used with this program!**